



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

HAROLD LEGGETT, Ph.D.
SECRETARY

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Contact: Rodney Mallett

Phone: 225-219-3964

DEQ prepares for Tropical Storm Gustav

BATON ROUGE – As Gustav approaches, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has asked industry and others to take precautions to protect human health and the environment.

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, DEQ and its state, local and federal partners recovered more than six million orphaned drums. These drums ranged in a variety of sizes and contained all kinds of product, some of which could have been damaging to human health or the environment. Many of these containers would not have been of concern had they been properly secured before the storms hit.

Also, there were numerous oil and other spills related to the storms of 2005. Proper emergency procedures instituted before the storms may have significantly reduced these releases.

DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett, who was an assistant secretary with DEQ in 2005, says early preparations by industry leaders and the public may help reduce possible environmental harm. By mitigating some of these preventable mishaps, DEQ and other state, federal and local agencies can use their resources in other areas.

“We have time to prepare for Gustav,” Leggett said. “Let’s use this time wisely to ensure safety for all those concerned. If you are evacuating, make sure you have secured any items that could cause damage due to high winds or water. Industry leaders should have emergency plans on standby to prevent any spills and prevent putting employees in harm’s way. We at DEQ certainly appreciate any pre-storm assistance you can provide because, should the storm hit Louisiana, recovery will be more efficient.”

Check www.getagameplan.org for information related to Hurricane Gustav.

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

: PO BOX 4301, BATON ROUGE, LA 70821-4301

P:225-219-3953 F:225-219-3971

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